

SEPTENARIUS  
SACRAMENTORUM

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Septenarius sacramentorum





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# Septenarius Sacramentorum

By  
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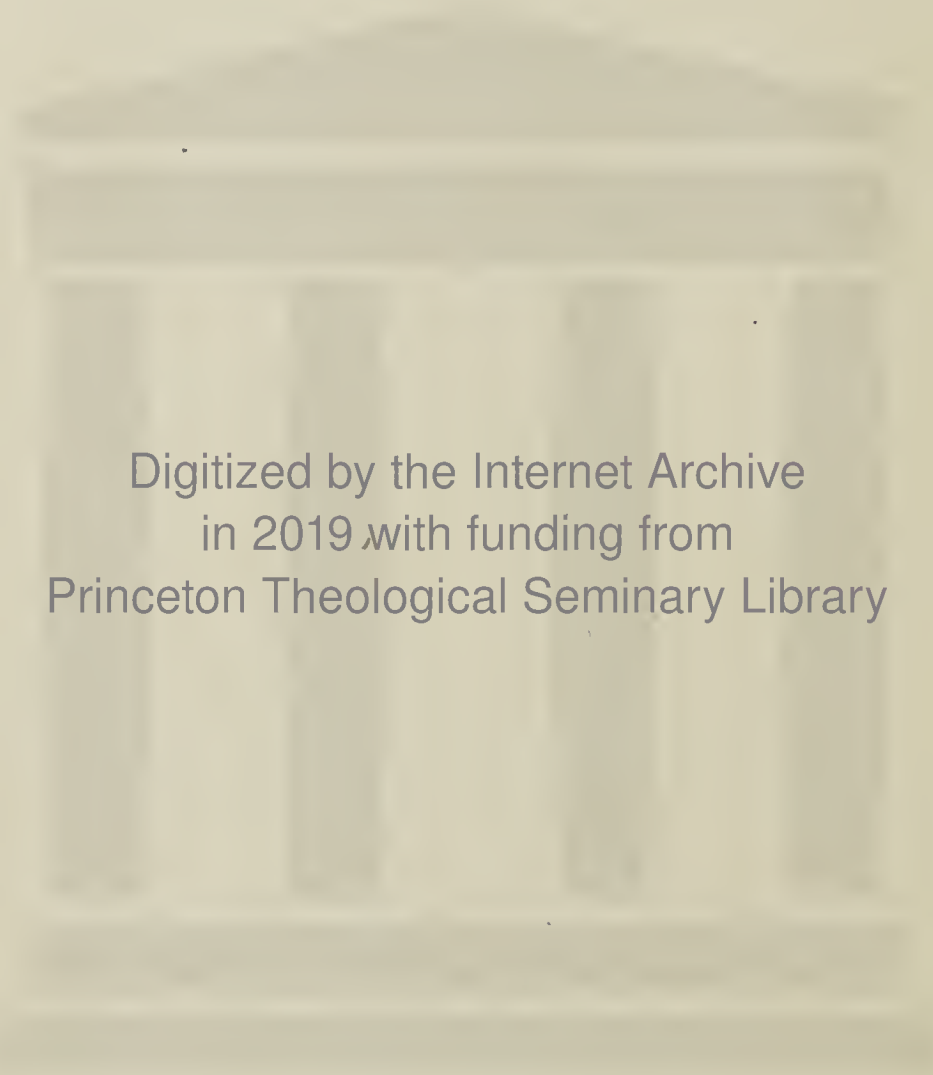
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## SEPTENARIUS SACRAMENTORUM

**F**OR sixteen centuries the doctrine of the seven Sacraments remained untarnished. With the possible exception of the Waldensians and Catharians, who under a false pretext despised the need of external rites, there is no stain on the fair vesture of the Dogma. The words of Christ and the teaching of the Apostles were too well known to warrant such folly. But Martin Luther, blinded by pride and passion, in the face of all proof and all practice, hazarded the denial that defiled the most tender and most sacred gift that ever came from the hand of the living God.

Since his day the Sacraments have been variously attacked. The numberless sects of Protestantism agree neither on their

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number, nor mode of operation. Rationalists reject them altogether as superstitious. Liberals and Modernists pervert their nature and divine origin. Since the sixteenth century therefore, arguments for the existence of seven Sacraments have been in prominence to confute and counteract this cataclysm of error and heresy.

Theologians draw up arguments from Sacred Scripture, Tradition, History and reason or “*ex convenientia*,” proving without doubt that the Sacraments are seven and have always been seven. It is not our purpose to augment these, but after having briefly stated them, to bring forth the congruent arguments St. Bonaventure so beautifully formulated in the greatest of centuries. Moreover, we shall touch on the history and signification of the number seven itself which may also

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serve as an argument postulating the fitness of seven Sacraments. The consideration of the number seven will be our first argument.

If we were to open the book of Nature and glance here and there in search of this number we should find it unmistakably, sometimes blazoned in letters of gold, again hidden in delicate mysterious characters. Men of science tell us that there are seven principal planets of the central solar system; that the moon phases every seven days; that the principal astral groups contain seven stars respectively; that the rainbow is composed of seven colors and the sun's rays when divided into a spectrum, show forth seven distinct hues.

The further we trace this number, the deeper becomes our wonderment. St. Gregory has it, that seven is the universal

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number in the higher world and in God. The sensible world, he explains, arose from four elements susceptible of divine power, developing into three orbs, (*orbis siderius*, *orbis crystallinus*, *orbis empyreus*), sidereal, crystalline and fiery. The lower world likewise arose from four elements, four vapors, four combinations, four qualities and three perfect vital powers namely, vegetative, sensitive and rational.

Deeper indeed our wonderment grows until at last we are lost in the maze of mystery. St. Bonaventure put it aptly when he said, "*Septenarius autem magnum mysterium habet.*" He then dissertates at length on the mystery showing that seven, whether found in the sensitive or in the lower world has its corresponding reason in an architypical world where God acts as a three-fold cause, efficient,

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exemplary, and final. The reason for God's causal action is fourfold, for He acts according to the sublimity of His power, the profundity of His wisdom, the depth of his benevolence and the length of His eternity. According to this universal number therefore, God governs the world and its course can be explained accordingly, as is found in Sacred Scripture. Three periods are distinguished: *tempora originalia*, or time of the law of nature; *tempora figuralia*, written law; and *tempora gratuita*, law of grace. These three periods are subdivided into seven Aeon respectively. *Tempora originalia* consists of the first seven days; *tempora figuralia* from the beginning of the world to the time of Christ, divided into seven periods, according to the varying history of the Jewish race; *tempora gratuita*, from the time of Christ to the day

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of the seventh Angel who swears by the living God that time shall be no longer. Again these three "tempora" taken collectively and subdivided show forth seven perfect divisions of time. The first extended from Adam to Noe terminating with the Deluge; second, Noe to Abraham, during which occurred the confusion of the tongues at Babel; third, Abraham to David; fourth, David to Transmigration; fifth, Transmigration to Christ; sixth, Christ to end of the world; seventh concurs with the sixth beginning with Christ's rest in the Sepulchre and continuing to the universal resurrection. Here time ends and the "octave of the Resurrection" begins.

Still pondering on this number, St. Bonaventure points out that there are seven capital vices, seven virtues, seven gifts of the Holy Ghost and a universal



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sevenfold petition contained in the "Our Father."

We might go on indefinitely in this strain, but our conclusion would be the same — the Creator in His own inscrutable ways chose this mysterious number and stamped it indelibly on the index of all His works, that men of all times might behold and wonder.

Early in the dim days of time's beginning we find that men did recognize this number that the Lord had shown them. Cuneiform texts, our earliest authorities, give clear evidence that the Babylonians regarded seven as mystical and sacred. With them it was the number of totality or completeness. It represented the highest power, the fullness of force, etc.; instance the seven Towers of Babylonia as representing the universe. The inhabitants of India, China, Persia, Greece, and

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classic-lands, the Celts and Germans — all regarded seven as a sacred and symbolic number. With them, especially the Greeks, it was sacred to their deities. With God's chosen people we find this wonderful number especially prominent; they seemed to better understand that it was His peculiar number. Very frequently, therefore, we find this number in the Old Testament. In the some five hundred passages that it is mentioned in one way or another, its general meaning is symbolical and sanctified.

We find the creation completed in six days and God resting on the seventh. In remembrance of this rest of God, the Mosaic law prescribed that the seventh day of the week would be free from worldly toil; and for this reason it was called Sabbath or Rest. (Exod. XXVIII-2) Every seventh month had a Sabbatic

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character, and its first day, called the Feast of Trumpets, was celebrated with special solemnity. (Num. XXIX-1) The land was to enjoy its Sabbath every seventh year. Nothing was to be sown and the spontaneous production was to be left to the poor and cattle. This seventh year was called the year of Remission, because in it creditors were bound to release poor debtors. (Lev. XXV-3-7. Deut. XXXI-10) Furthermore, the three great joyous festivals of the Jews, the Pasch, Pentecost and Tabernacles, were bound up mysteriously with seven; the Pasch lasted seven days, (Lev. XXIII-6) the Pentecost was celebrated seven weeks after the Pasch, (Lev. XXIII-15) and the Feast of the Tabernacles on the fifteenth day of the seventh month lasted for seven days. (Lev. XXV-9) On this day the High Priest, making atonement for himself and

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for the priesthood, sprinkled the blood of a bullock seven times before the Mercy Seat. (Lev. XVI-14) St. Paul, in his Epistle to the Hebrews, (IX-13-14) aptly explains the symbolism of this ceremony. "For if the blood of goats and of oxen, and the ashes of a heifer being sprinkled sanctify such as are defiled to the cleansing of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who by the Holy Ghost offered Himself unspotted unto God, cleanse our conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" A marked symbolism indeed, which might be explained further. The blood of Christ is our saving Principle; by It flowing through the seven channels of the Sacraments we are sanctified and sustained. Did not the sevenfold sprinkling of bullock blood typify in some way our sevenfold spiritual renovation? It appears so, strongly.

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Perhaps this significance is the reason why God sanctified seven — sanctified it, blazoned it on the firmament and planted it in the human heart. Perhaps this is the explanation of the mystery.

We have other instances of this peculiar use, both in the Old and in the New Testaments, which strengthen our conjecture. At times the signification is striking, again hidden, taking the form of a remote preparation by means of the sevenfold number's predominance in observations, ceremonies and miracles.

The seven pillars sustaining the house built by Wisdom (Prov. IX-1) prefigure strongly the seven Sacraments. St. Paul explains this. (Heb. III-3-6) The House built by Wisdom is the Church of God built by His Only-Begotten Son. The seven Sacraments are the seven pillars. The seven-branch golden Candlestick

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which God ordered Moses to make and place in the Holy of Holies typifies the light of the Holy Ghost and His seven-fold grace which come through the Sacraments. (Exod. XXV-31) On the seventh day God called out of the midst of a cloud enveloping Mount Sinai to Moses. (Exod. XXIV-51) Through Moses he commanded that the hands of Aaron and his sons be consecrated seven days. (Exod. XXXIX-35) To purify a house from leprosy the priest was to sprinkle it seven times. (Lev. XIV-51) Sacrifices were governed by this number, for we read that Balaam said to Balac, "Build me here seven altars and prepare as many calves and the same number of rams." (Num. XXIII-1) Again, according to the Law, Judas Maccabeus gathered his army and came into the city of Odollam and when the seventh day came, they

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purified themselves. (II Mach. XII-38)  
Our Saviour fed seven thousand men with  
seven loaves. (Matt. XV-36) He drove  
out seven demons from Mary Magdalen.  
(Mark XVI-9)

These texts and our previous consideration do not prove the existence of the seven Sacraments; but if the divine Goodness in all His dealings with His Chosen People magnified the sevenfold number, most wisely did he institute in His Church seven sources whereby we might participate in the merits of His Son's Blood shed for us.

Having thus far shown from a consideration of the number seven itself, how fitting it is that God should have instituted seven Sacraments, we shall now prove, first from Sacred Scripture, then from Tradition, History, and conventional arguments that He really did

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institute and determine our sevenfold sanctification. We set aside as irrelevant the controversy as to whether He instituted all the Sacraments mediately or immediately, "in specie" or "in genere," and follow the opinion of St. Bonaventure which has it that Christ instituted His Sacraments in different ways, for even though the Incarnate Word is the source of Sacramental Grace, some sacramental grace existed before the Incarnation. On the other hand, Sacramental grace did not exist as such (*medio modo se habens*) until after the descent of the Holy Ghost.

Before the Incarnation therefore, penitential compunction and matrimonial generation were necessary. Sins were forgiven by perfect sorrow and belief in the Redeemer to come. The human race was generated legitimately according to a Law that God Himself implanted in the



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human conscience. So Christ did not institute the Sacraments of Penance and Matrimony anew, but merely consummated and confirmed by His Evangelical Law what His Father had instituted from the beginning. This he did when He preached Penance along the Sea of Galilee, (Matt. IV-17) and when he assisted at the Marriage Feast of Cana, elevating thereby the existing rite to the dignity of a Sacrament. (St. John II-1) The institution of these Sacraments were therefore mediate and "in genere." The Sacraments of Confirmation and Extreme Unction Christ but insinuated and initiated. Before the coming of the Holy Ghost on the first great Pentecost there was no full distribution of His gifts. Up to that time the Apostles had not been fully fortified to openly profess and confess Christ; nor had the full mental and moral renovation

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been connected with the anointing of the sick. So Our Divine Saviour introduced and insinuated Confirmation when He imposed His hands upon little children brought to Him, (Mark X-16) and when He promised His disciples the coming of the Paraclete (John XIV-26); Extreme Unction when He sent His disciples to heal the sick and to anoint them with oil. (St. Mark VI-13) Again, the institution of these Sacraments was mediate and "in genere."

The Sacraments of Baptism, Eucharist, and Holy Orders, however, Christ instituted fully, immediately and "in specie;" Baptism, when He Himself was Baptized by St. John in the Jordan, (S. Matt. III-13) and when He said to His Apostles, "Going therefore teach ye all nation, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost."

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(St. Matt. XXVII-19) Again, “unless a man be born again of the water and of the Holy Ghost he can not enter the kingdom of God.” (St. John III-5); Holy Orders, when He gave His Apostles the power of binding and forgiving sins, “Whose sins you shall forgive they are forgiven them, whose sins you shall retain they are retained.” (St. John XX-22); and when He gave them the power to confect the Sacrament of the Altar. “Do this for a commemoration of Me.” (St. Luke XXII-19) Finally, He instituted the Eucharist when He compared Himself to a grain of wheat, (St. John XII-24) and when He confected the Sacrament of His Body and Blood and gave to His disciples. (St. Mark XIV-22-24, St. Matt. XXVI-26, I Cor. XI-24) Thus our Saviour consecrated, consummated and first received these three Sacraments Himself, thereby fully

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instituting and determining them. Thus we see that the seven Sacraments can be proven individually from Sacred Scripture, though we find nowhere in Holy Writ an explicit enumeration.

We appeal, therefore, to Tradition to prove beyond a doubt that seven Sacraments, no more and no less, have existed from the beginning. During the stormy days of the twelfth century, references were frequently made to the seven Sacraments. The Fathers, it is true, did not refer "ex professo" to the seven Sacraments, but simply mentioned them casually. In those days of lively faith, when, as we stated above, the uncontaminated teaching of Christ was fresh in the minds of the people, no such explicit reference was necessary. Other reasons are also in evidence why no such reference was made. The *Disciplina Arcana* prescribed

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that the doctrine of mysteries and of the Sacraments should not be divulged among the uninitiated. Hence, very little was written concerning these. The theological concept had not yet been scientifically analyzed: the term "Sacramenta" applied rather broadly to "something sacred." Such a use we find in Hugh of St. Victor. For this reason Liberals object that the seven Sacraments were unknown before the twelfth century and that they, as such, were invented by Peter Lombard. How groundless are these objections in the light of the true facts. Peter Lombard invented nothing: he simply synthetically exposed what was handed down by the Fathers and implicitly contained in Sacred Scripture. Although but implicitly contained and casually mentioned, it is certain that the Sacraments were in use from the days of

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Christ. This is evident, for Tertullian implicitly mentioned Confirmation and Penance, implicitly Holy Orders; Holy Orders, in turn was explicitly referred to by St. Cyprian; Matrimony, by St. Ignatius. All the Sacraments except Extreme Unction were mentioned by St. Augustine. Extreme Unction, however, was described by Pope Innocent I during that same century (fifth).

Coming nearer our own day, we find from the twelfth to the sixteenth century there existed an undisputed unanimous consent of theologians that the Sacraments are seven, and this teaching having been solemnly approved by the Council of Trent (Sess. VII, Can 1) remains to the present day. This agreement rested upon a well determined, synthetic notion of the term "Sacramentum" explicitly and scientifically elucidated. It is a theological

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argument that such a consent lasting as it did throughout centuries, approved by the Magisterium Solemne of the Church, constitutes an infallible criterion of divine truth. From Tradition, therefore, seven Sacraments are evident.

As briefly as possible we shall give the historical argument which shows that the Dogma had been universally taught and believed up to the day of the ill-fated Luther and his co-workers. Such universality of belief being a fact it must have been founded on Apostolic Tradition, and as such, was the teaching of Christ and true. The ancient documents of the different branches of the Church, Latin, Greek, and Oriental, are sufficient proof of this universality. The belief of the Latin Church was expressed officially in the "Decretum Ad Armenos" (XV Cent.) in which the Seven Sacraments are

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enumerated. Again, from the Council of Lyons, 1274, we have the “*confessio fidei*” of Michael Palaeologus where we find these words: “*Tenet etiam et docet eadem S. Romana Ecclesia Septem esse ecclesiastica Sacramenta.*” This belief is evident also from the profession of faith exacted from the Waldensians, (1210), in which each of the seven Sacraments is individually mentioned. Further, the fact is supported by the unanimous consent of theologians, and by monumental and oral tradition as given in the previous argument. The belief of the Greek Church was aptly epitomized by Jeremias, Schismatic Patriarch of Constantinople, when he answered the German Protestants: “*Dicimus septem divina esse Sacramenta*”; again, in the condemnation of the Patriarch Cyrillus Lucarius by the Greek Councils of Constantinople and



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Jerusalem for having adopted the Calvinistic error of two Sacraments; again expressed in the declarations of the Councils of Florence and Lyons at which Schismatic Greeks were present and which had the the full approbation of the Greek Church. Finally, the seven Sacraments are enumerated in the most ancient rituals and prayer-books and taught unanimously by even Schismatic Greek Theologians. The Oriental branch of the Church, which cut itself off in the fifth century, namely the Nestorians and Monophysites, retain the doctrine of seven Sacraments as was explicitly declared by their Bishops at the time of the Lutheran heresy. This belief is also found in their ancient rituals.

This historically certain, universal belief of the whole Church and all the Oriental Sects can not be explained unless

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it was handed down from the Apostles. For if the Greeks who separated in the ninth century, and the Orientals who separated in the fifth, had less than seven Sacraments before they separated, they surely would never have adopted them later. Their tenacity to ancient traditions would have rendered this impossible. No discussion of the Septenarius ever arose between Mother Church and these Children who cut themselves from her. Therefore we trace this belief back to the fifth century. Nor was an innovation in this matter possible in the fifth century, nor before. For during those early centuries, the Bishops are known to have been most vigilant in guarding Apostolic teaching and most determined in upholding ancient traditions. This vigilance and care for Apostolic Tradition is evinced in all controversies of these early cen-

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turies. Instance those of Donatism and Arianism. Surely, then, this vigilance would have blocked any attempt at innovation in so grave a tradition as the number of the Sacraments. But up to the sixteenth century we find no controversy as to the number of the Sacraments, hence it is certain that all considered the seven Sacraments the doctrine of Christ, taught by the Apostles and handed down unshaken. Aptly did Tertullian express our conclusion; "Certum quod apud multos unum invenitur non est erratum sed traditum."

The fact of the seven Sacraments being thus proven, from Sacred Scripture, Tradition and History, we now take St. Bonaventure's congruent argument to demonstrate why it should be so. In his beautiful explanation, the Seraphic Doctor evinces his usual profundity of erudi-

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tion, divine and human. He seems to gaze beyond the finite sphere when he says that the Sacraments are seven according to a certain correspondence to the seven forms of grace which existed during the seven aeons of time. The life of man from the cradle to the last great rest in the "cycle of eternity" and "octave of the Resurrection" is typified in these seven aeons. Each had its own peculiar grace. In the first stage, that of infancy, corresponding to the first aeon, man must be reborn spiritually in order to live to God. Baptism fills this need. The second, that of childhood, when we begin to speak and discern, corresponds to the second aeon, in which occurred the distinction of Tongues; here we need a new strength to confess aright and fearlessly Christ Our God. Confirmation fills this need. In youth, the third stage of man, generative

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powers develop which must be utilized for the preservation of the human race. Matrimony here has its place. This stage corresponds to the aeon in which Abraham received his call and promise "de semine." During the fourth stage of life, that of flourishing manhood, corresponding to the flourishing age under the Kings, strong spiritual food is needed lest man be vanquished by the powers of darkness. This needed Spiritual Food is the Eucharist. In the fifth stage, that of old age, corresponding to the age of Transmigration, a man begins to lose his strength; his powers are weakened, his falls become prominent. During these days he needs to be lifted up, to be revived. Penance fills this need. In the last days of man, those of declining old age, corresponding to the aeon in which the world will end, he is joined with death.

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He needs strength to aid him on his last great journey and in Extreme Unction he finds that strength. His seventh stage, that of rest forever, now begins. In order to have attained this rest, he must have lived well, near to the laws of God and his Church. Holy Orders especially prepares, man, individually and collectively, for this.

But to hasten on to his main argument, — Christ the Incarnate Word, the “Power and Wisdom of God” (I Cor. I-24), Who through His Passion and Death wrought man’s redemption is the Physician of all human ills. Being a Physician of great power, wisdom, mercy and clemency, He should have selected the best means whereby “Homo aegrotans,” ailing man, a pure spirit trammelled in flesh, could be perfectly healed of his ills as far as is possible in his present state.

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This He did when He instituted the seven Sacraments.

A perfect cure can be wrought only by expulsion of the malady, by the introduction of health and by a conservation of the health introduced. The malady of man is sevenfold; threefold culpable, namely sin, original, mortal, and venial, and fourfold penal, the wages of original sin, namely, ignorance, malice, infirmity and concupiscence. Against these seven ills, a sevenfold medicine is required. Each disease must have its own peculiar remedy; the germs of one are of a different species than those of another; each therefore must have its individual, counteracting serum. Instance for example the diseases of the human anatomy. How widely diversified are they! A serum that could be used to counteract diphtheria, would not avail for a lacerated ulcer and

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so on through the almost innumerable ills our weak flesh is heir to. "Non sanat oculus quod sanat calcaneum," says Hieronymus.

Baptism is the heavenly Physician's prescription for original sin. By reason of our common nature with Adam, through whom original justice was lost, we are born "sons of wrath" (Eph. II-3) with the stain of that lack of justice upon our souls. The soul as it comes from the hand of its Maker is immaculate, but by reason of its infusion into a body formed by carnal generation, it contracts the penalty of a weakened nature. Adam's soul corrupted nature, nature in turn corrupts our souls. This is why man comes into the world with a stain of fault and of punishment upon him. The stain of fault, or original sin property so-called, is taken away by the Sacrament of Baptism. The



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soul is washed spiritually, that is, the eternal punishment due to original sin is taken away, the temporal punishment or a weakened nature remaining.

Penance is the remedy for mortal sin. Mortal sin popularly defined is a turning away from God. It is the result of an act of the free will of man choosing a commutable good in preference to the Incommutable Good. This offense is forgiven when the will reacts and chooses again the Incommutable Good. This condition being placed, the wound is healed by God's own authority in the Sacrament of Penance.

Against Venial sin, the soul's third malady, we have Extreme Unction. Venial sin is a slight offence against God and is often more the "*reliquae peccati*" than actual fault. It is rather outside the law than against it, for in Venial sin a

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commutable good is sought in preference to the Incommutable Good. By its nature Extreme Unction is determined to healing. Its objects are the small wounds and old scars that need a final dressing.

The four penal ills are God's special punishment for Adam's fall. Against ignorance He determined Holy Orders, wherein is contained special grace whereby a man may wisely lead his fellowmen back to God. Against malice or our proneness to evil, He gave us Himself, the Fountain-head of spiritual refreshment, in the Most Holy Sacrament of the Eucharist. Against infirmity or weakness of will, we have the tonic of Confirmation. Its special grace nerves us to the fight. Against concupiscence, the "sting of the flesh" He applies the lotion of Matrimony, which tempers and excuses it.

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The maladies being thus expelled as far as is possible in this life a new health or vigor is introduced. The new health is the practice of the Virtues, three theological and four cardinals. The seven Sacraments again aptly introduce these Virtues.

By Baptism the soul is healed and the gift of Faith is infused which when reason dawns suavely disposes the recipient to elicit acts of Faith. Faith is essentially a supernatural act; hence it requires the grace which ordinarily its given in the Sacrament of Baptism. Hope is especially introduced into the soul by Confirmation, for upon the reception of strength from on High a man more strongly hopes for his final end. His hope rests on the fact that if he corresponds to the graces afforded him he will surely be saved. In Confirmation, moreover, his will is strengthened to follow grace. The

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Sacrament of the Eucharist, the miracle of love, introduces the Virtue of Charity into the heart of the recipient. Charity is the pure love of God. Must not therefore this love be enkindled in our poor hearts when we come in direct contact with the furnace of love! Surely we are not wholly dumb, insensible things.

The Cardinal Virtues of Justice, Perseverance, Prudence and Temperance are respectively introduced by the Sacraments of Penance, Extreme Unction, Holy Orders and Matrimony. Justice is introduced by Penance since in this Sacrament sin is taken away, Justice "ipso facto" filling the soul; Perseverance by Extreme Unction for one of its principal effects is the strengthening of the soul against diabolical temptations; Prudence by Holy Orders, since this Sacrament confers the special grace whereby the

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Ambassadors of Christ may rule the Church of God prudently and well; Temperance by Matrimony for in this Sacrament, the recipients receive the needed grace to live temperately according to conjugal law.

Health being now attained, it must be guarded and conserved, otherwise our cure is imperfect and in vain. But how are we frail mortals to guard ourselves against the designs and intrigues of the evil one? The powers of Hell are unleashed against us, the gauntlet of a mighty army is let down before us. Of ourselves, trammelled with a tarnished nature we can do nothing; we must fly to the arms of Mother Church who is "terrible as an army set in array" and there put on the armor she offers us. The stages of the fight are sevenfold so she gives us in Christ's name the sevenfold armor of

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grace, the Sacraments. The conflict is continually changing by reason of the corruptible nature of the fight. Thus it is. The moment the tender babe is born into the world a new fight begins. The All-wise and Merciful God could not wish this babe to enter the struggle unassisted, so at the instant the fight begins he is offered the armor of Baptismal grace. As the babe waxes in strength and at length attains the use of reason, the fight changes; it comes out more in the open, the attacks become more fierce and direct. Thus struggling, the youth needs the breastplate of Confirmation. No matter how virile or wary he may be, the youth will inevitably be wounded in the fight. If his wound be slight, his fall but venial, the Sacrament of the Eucharist will refresh him for the struggle; if his wound be mortal he is healed by the Sacrament

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of Penance. Coming nigh the end of his struggle, having "fought a good fight," the dust and grime of many an arena still clinging to him, the hardy soldier of Christ needs to be fortified. Satan will make attempt to snatch the ebbing soul from the hand of its Leader. He will terrify the shrinking soul, he will use all his hellish craft at this strategic moment. So the departing Christian needs the armor of Extreme Unction whereby he shakes off effectively the dust of past delinquencies and is strengthened to resist all evil power.

Alas, the fight must go on!

New soldiers must be supplied, naturally and spiritually. Holy Orders renews the fighters spiritually dead and introduces them again into the struggle, for it is the office of Orders to administer the revivifying Sacraments. In the natural

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order Matrimony supplies the soldiers and this is its special duty. Thus the fight of life goes on, ever changing, ever the same.

Here St. Bonaventure concludes his arguments after having shown from a threefold reason that the Sacraments should be seven. The expulsion of our maladies demand them, the introduction of necessary health require them, and the conservation of this health necessitates them. Beautiful, indeed, are these wonderful arguments! If we have explained them with any little ray of credit to the great Seraphic Doctor, we are glad; if not, we beg the Saint's forgiveness and your clemency.









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